

REMARKS

In this paper, claims 2 and 6 are currently amended, and claims 23-26 have been added. After entry of the above amendment, claims 1-26 are pending, with claim 22 temporarily withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Campagnolo (US 5,806,372). This basis for rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites an apparatus for reducing an engaging force of an engaging member for a bicycle component, wherein the apparatus comprises a first engaging member; a movable second engaging member, wherein the first engaging member engages the second engaging member; and a biasing mechanism that applies a biasing force to bias the first engaging member and the second engaging member towards each other. The biasing mechanism reduces the biasing force when the second engaging member moves.

Campagnolo discloses a control device for a bicycle derailleur. The control device includes a rotor (7) rotatably mounted around a shaft (4). A toothed wheel (22) is fixed to rotor (7) so that toothed wheel (22) and rotor (7) rotate together as a unit. A pawl (20) is rotatably mounted to a downshift lever (10) through a pivot shaft (19) and is biased toward toothed wheel (22) by a spring (23). Pawl (20) is maintained away from toothed wheel (22) by a ledge (14a) when downshift lever (10) is in the position shown in Fig. 2. An upshift lever (11) that includes a tooth (31) is rotatably mounted to a plate (28) through a pivot shaft (27). Tooth (31) is biased away from toothed wheel (22) by a spring (29).

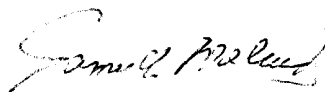
The office action refers to either pawl (20) or tooth (31) as a first engaging member, and the office action refers to toothed wheel (22) (and the corresponding first teeth (21) or second teeth (31)) as a movable second engaging member. However, as an initial matter, since upshift lever (11) and tooth (31) are always biased *away* from toothed wheel (22) by spring (29), spring (29) cannot be interpreted to be a biasing mechanism that applies a biasing force to bias the first engaging member (31) and the second engaging member (32) *towards* each other as recited in claim 1.

As for the alleged first engaging member (20) and second engaging member (22), the only time toothed wheel (22) moves is when tooth (31) engages one of the second teeth (32) during the operation of upshift lever (11) and when pawl (20) engages one of the first teeth (21) during the operation of downshift lever (10). During the time that tooth (31) engages one of the second teeth (32) during the operation of upshift lever (11), pawl (20) is stationary in the position shown in Fig. 2, so clearly no change in biasing force results from spring (23). During the time that pawl (20) engages one of the teeth (21) during the operation of downshift lever (10), pawl (20) is stationary in the engaged position relative to teeth (21), so clearly no change in biasing force results from spring (23) when second engaging member (22) moves.

The office action ignores the language "wherein the biasing mechanism reduces the biasing force when the second engaging member moves" recited in claim 1 because this feature allegedly is the inherent result of the other structures recited in the claim. However, the mere fact that a first engaging member is biased towards a second engaging member, wherein the first engaging member engages the second engaging member, does not inherently result in a reduction of the biasing force when the second engaging member moves. This lack of a reduction in biasing force is readily seen from Campagnolo, so the wherein clause in claim 1 cannot be ignored.

Accordingly, it is believed that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 has been overcome by the foregoing remarks, and it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. Allowance of all claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Deland  
Reg. No. 31,242

DELAND LAW OFFICE  
P.O. Box 69  
Klamath River, California 96050  
(530) 465-2430